AN ESSAY UPON PUBLICK SPIRIT;

BEING

A SATYR in PROSE

UPON THE

Manners *and* Luxury

OF THE

TIMES,

The Chief Sources of our present *Parties* and *Diviſions.*

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G.R. III
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THE PREFACE.

THE following Eſſay contains a bold, but a gene-
ral, and therefore I hope an inoffenſive Satyr;
eſpecially ſince 'tis writ with an Intention to hurt
none, and to do good to all. It neither reflects upon
Perſons nor Parties, but is levell'd at Vices, and not
Men. The Deſign of it is to ſhew what Publick Spi-
rit *is, and in what Condition it has been for ſeveral*
Years amongſt us; and that 'tis only to be retriev'd
by that Reformation of Manners *which the late*
King and Her preſent Majeſty have often, with ſo
much Wiſdom, as well as with ſo much Religion, re-
commended from the Throne.

The Reſtoration of Publick Spirit *is certainly of the utmoſt Importance to the Duration of Publick Liberty, of which 'tis the only ſolid and laſting Baſis. And tho' Liberty is at preſent perfectly ſecure under the Reign of the Beſt of Queens, tho' it is threaten'd with no Danger from the Immediate Proteſtant Succeſſors, 'tis yet the Duty of ſo great, ſo wiſe, and ſo brave a People, to tranſmit to their lateſt Poſterity the Rights and Privileges which they have receiv'd from their remoteſt Anceſtors; and they ought to take the more Care of this at a Seaſon, when ſuch contagious Diſtempers rage throughout* Europe, *as may make a great Alteration in the Line of Succeſſion in a little time.*

The modern Stateſmen and Legiſlators of free Nations ſeem to me to have been for the moſt part employ'd, rather in remedying than in preventing great Diſorders, and to have been more taken up in providing againſt the immediate Political Occaſions of them, than in removing the Moral and the Natural Cauſes of them, eſpecially thoſe two important ones, the Education of Youth, and the reſtraining of Luxury in the elder ſort, of which the wiſe Ancients took ſuch peculiar Care.

'Tis morally impoſſible that Liberty and Luxury ſhould live any where ſo long in ſo ſtrict a Confederacy as they have done at Venice; *which is ſecure from Faction by the Harmony of its Orders, and from Invaſion by its Scitution. But in a mix'd Monarchy like ours, where we are neither ſecure from Diviſion by our Conſtitution, (tho' that Conſtitution may for ought I know be the beſt that we are capable of) nor from Invaſion by our Scituation, both which are too evident from Hiſtory and Experience, Luxury that nouriſhes*

nouriſhes our Paſſions, and augments our Wants, muſt of Neceſſity inflame our Factions, and augment our Diviſions, and cannot be with too much Care repreſs'd.

If what is here publiſh'd is favourably receiv'd, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew in a Second Part the mighty Miſchiefs that the Introduction of foreign Manners and foreign Luxury hath done to this Iſland, and to the reſt of Europe; *and the proper Methods that are to be us'd to reſtrain Luxury, and to retrieve* Publick Spirit.

I muſt confeſs the Reformation of Manners *ought to be one of the peculiar Provinces of the Clergy: But at a time when they too often ſtoop from their Seraphick Contemplations, and the high Dignity of their Function, to intermeddle in Human Affairs, they give us ſtrong Temptations to make Repriſals upon them, and to entrench upon an Office which is properly theirs. I believe it will appear by the following Draught of the* Publick Manners, *that 'tis not for want of Buſineſs proper to their Function, that they pollute the Church with Matters peculiar to the State. Which Proceeding is the more difficult to be accounted for, becauſe by doing their own Buſineſs, that is, by converting the Souls, and reforming the Manners of Men, they would make an admirable Proviſion for the Safety and Quiet of the Government; whereas by their medling in Civil Matters, they never fail to inflame Mens Paſſions, to corrupt their Manners, to heighten their Animoſities, to augment their Diviſions, and to raiſe Convulſions in the State.*

However, neither the Clergy, nor the Lay-Societies for the Reformation of Manners, *can employ the moſt effectual Method, I mean according to Human Appearance, for the immediate Suppreſſion of bare-fac'd Luxury,*

Luxury, the ſpreading Contagion of which is the greateſt Corrupter of the Publick Manners, and the greateſt Extinguiſher of Publick Spirit. *That Method can be only practis'd by the joint Authority of the Queen and her great Council, that is, by the wholſome Severity of ſumptuary Laws, or Publick Taxes upon Luxury. And it was partly in order to ſhew the Reaſon, if not the Neceſſity of ſuch Taxes, that the following Eſſay was begun. For whereas moſt of the Taxes which have been hitherto laid, have been laid upon our Neceſſaries or our Conveniences; and the Money that is gather'd from both theſe, ſubſtracts ſo much from the general Stock of Trade, and conſequently weakens and diſcourages Induſtry: A Tax upon our Superfluities and our Luxuries, will by rendring us frugal, and conſequently induſtrious, have a Tendency to the augmenting the National Stock of Trade. Beſides 'tis plain, that a Tax upon our Superfltities and our Luxuries will do good to the whole Community, without being burdenſome to any part of it; for few will pay their Money upon ſuch a Tax, but they who are able to pay it, or who will be animated and ſupported by their Pride at leaſt to pay it chearfully; and ſo Luxury, that is naturally an Enemy to Government, will be made ſubſervient to it: And they who do not pay their Money upon ſuch a Tax, will be the more enabled to pay all the other Taxes; which will reconcile ſuch a Tax or ſuch Taxes to all the ſober, frugal, and induſtrious part of the Nation, eſpecially ſince we have ſhewn above, that nothing will more contribute to the uniting our Minds, than the reſtraining our Luxuries; upon which Account no Tax can be more effectual for the finiſhing this important War, which our Diviſions prolong. And as there will be more Occaſion for ſuch a Tax upon a general Peace than there is now, becauſe Luxury unreſtrain'd by Law will in all likeli-*

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hood then encreaſe, and the Encreaſe of Luxury will endanger this Iſland more, than the moſt dangerous Foreign War; Upon this Account it will be hard to invent a Tax more proper to be continued for the paying the Debts of the Nation, than a Tax upon our Vanities, our Superfluities, and our Luxuries. For which Reaſon the Act for prohibiting Immoderate Gaming, *and that for* preventing of Duelling, *which are two of the fatal Effects of Luxury, the latter of Luxury and Pride, and the former of Avarice and Luxury complicated, will be glorious to this Parliament, among all to whom the Proſperity of their Country is dear, among all to whom Law and Publick Liberty are dear. How inglorious has it been hitherto to this Iſland, which is and has always been govern'd by Law, that we have ſo long conniv'd at a cruel Cuſtom; a Cuſtom ſo* Gothick, *that there is no Inſtance of it either in* Grecian *or* Roman *Hiſtory, and ſo Deſtructive, ſo Arbitrary, and ſo Barbarous, that Tyranny it ſelf in a neighbouring Kingdom has not been able to endure it; as if the Tyrant had look'd upon it as an Uſurpation of his own Tyrannical Power, that his Slaves ſhould have the Lives of their Fellow-Slaves at their Mercy. If any of our Princes ſhould have taken the Life of a free-born Subject, even upon the greateſt Provocation, without Proceſs of Law, what a terrible Outcry would that Arbitrary Proceeding have caus'd? And yet a Subject not only dares, but thinks himſelf oblig'd to attempt the Life of a Fellow-Subject on a fooliſh Punctilio, and on a ſenſeleſs Whimſey. To what purpoſe is it to make wholſome Laws for the Security of Property, when Life, the very Source and Fountain of Property, is every Moment in Danger? This Parliament therefore has laid the greateſt and higheſt Obligation upon all their Fellow-Subjects, that Man can lay upon Man, by reſcuing them from the Tyranny of a Barbarous Cuſtom, and making it ſcandalous to do*

that

that for the future, which before 'twas infamous to refuſe; ſo that all their Fellow-Subjects owe the Security of their very Being under God to them. By how precarious and how fantaſtick a Tenure has Life been held till now, when we were oblig'd to hazard it, againſt all Reaſon, againſt all Juſtice, at the Will of every contemptible Wretch in order to preſerve Honour, as if Honour could be different from Reaſon and Juſtice, and from the Laws of our Country? With how much Satisfaction do all who love that Country ſee, that tho' Publick Spirit *in other Parts is ſunk and fallen ſo low, yet we may hope once more to ſee it riſe, ſince it ſtill flouriſhes in the Illuſtrious Repreſentative of the* Britiſh *Nation, whoſe Members are ſo remarkable, and ſeveral of them ſo renown'd for their undaunted Courage, that Malice it ſelf muſt be oblig'd to own, that there could be nothing private and nothing ſelfiſh in the Inducement to this Bill, which could be introduc'd by nothing but that God-like Motive of an univerſal Good.*

AN

AN ESSAY ON Publick Spirit, &c.

CHAP. I.

WHAT the Spirit of a Man is to the Body Natural, That, Publick Spirit is to the Body Politick: When the Spirit is vigorous, for the moſt part, the Body is ſtrong and healthful; but the Body decays when the Spirit languiſhes, and after it totally departs, diſſolves, and returns into the Elements, from which it firſt was taken; as a Nation, when that mighty Spirit that animates it, wholly fails, returns into the Maſs of Nations.

Since Publick Spirit then is that, by whoſe Vigor States are ſtrong and healthful, and by whoſe Languiſhment they decay; nothing ſeems to me to be of more Importance to the Good of my Country, than a free and a bold Enquiry, What this publick

Spirit is, and in what Condition 'tis at preſent among us?

Publick Spirit may be defin'd to be the ardent Love of one's Country, affecting us with a zealous Concern for its Honour and Intereſt, and inſpiring us with Reſolution and Courage to promote its Service and Glory.

Since Publick Spirit then is inſeparable from the Love of one's Country, we come now to enquire, What it is to love one's Country? A bold and a dangerous Inquiſition; which, as it will diſtinguiſh Publick Spirit from private Intereſt, or from Vain-Glory, will be to many, a provoking Satyr. But thoſe People, who are engaged by their Pride or their private Intereſt to ſupport the Publick Liberty, would do well to conſider, that they are oblig'd by the ſame Intereſt to ſecond and encourage any Endeavour that is made towards the keeping up, or reſtoring of Publick Spirit; it being certain, that a General Publick Spirit is the only ſolid Baſis of a National Liberty; and that where-ever that Spirit is not, Liberty is but by Accident: For Intereſt may vary, and Pride may change its Object; but the Love of our Country, become habituate and grown up with us from our Infancy, is always ſure to remain.

To love one's Country then, is not ſo much to be fond of one's Soil or Climate, ſince whole Nations have conſented to leave thoſe with the greateſt Alacrity. The *Switzers*, in the Time of *Julius Cæſar*, were reſolv'd to leave their barren Rocks for the fertile Vales of the *Franche Comté*; and the *Goths* and *Vandals*, ſome Ages after them, forſook the horrid Climate of the North for the lovely Fields of *Italy*; both the one and the other rightly judging, that where ever their Fellow-Citizens were, there was likewiſe their Country.

To love one's Country then, is to love one's Country-men; but he who loves his Country-men, muſt love them for ſomething that diſtinguiſhes them from other People: For as he who loves his Friend, loves him for ſomething which makes him that Individual Perſon; ſo he who loves his Country-men, loves them for ſomething which makes them that peculiar Nation.

But that which makes a People that peculiar Nation, and diſtinguiſhes them from all other Nations, is their Cuſtoms and Manners. He then who loves his Country-men, loves their Cuſtoms and Manners. Thus the *Macedonians*, who with the moſt ardent Alacrity, left the Sun and the Soil of *Greece* to follow their young Heroe, rather choſe to part with their Lives, than to forſake the Manners of their Country. But as the more Men are diſtinguiſh'd from other Men by their Manners, the greater and the more extraordinary is the Friendſhip that is profeſt between them; the more a Nation is diſtinguiſh'd by its Manners from other Nations, the greater is the Love of its Children to it.

And therefore the wiſeſt of ancient Law-givers took Care, that the People of the Common-wealths which they founded, ſhould be moſt illuſtriouſly diſtinguiſh'd from other Nations by their Cuſtoms and Manners. Thus did *Moſes*, thus did *Lycurgus* diſtinguiſh the Manners of the *Jews* and *Spartans*. The Cuſtoms and Manners of the *Jews* make a conſiderable part of the *Pentateuch*, and whole Treatiſes have been writ of the Manners of the *Lacedæmonians*. What they did for their real Common-wealths, *Plato* did for his imaginary one. *Plato, in his Laws*, ſays *Montaigne, is of Opinion, that nothing could be more dangerous to the State which he founded, than the granting Licence to the Youth, to alter their Habits, and change their Geſtures, their Dances, their Exerciſes, and their Muſick from one to another manner, al-*

tering their Judgments and their Opinions, ſometimes one way, and ſometimes another, running mad after Novelties, and doing Honour, and giving Rewards to thoſe who invent, and who introduce them. By which Proceding, their Manners are corrupted, and their moſt ancient and ſacred Laws come to be diſdain'd and contemn'd.

It was the Opinion of thoſe ancient Sages, that the Duration of that Publick Spirit, which they knew to be the Soul of their various Politick Bodies, depended upon the Perpetuity of their Cuſtoms and Manners. And indeed we find that the ruder Nations have always conquer'd the more refin'd, as the *Perſians* the *Aſſyrians*, the *Grecians* the *Perſians*, the *Romans* the *Grecians*, and the *Goths* and *Vandals* the *Romans*. Now the Nations which we call rude, are they which retain their old Cuſtoms.

Since it appears from what has been ſaid, that Publick Spirit flows from the Love of one's Country; and that to love one's Country is to love one's Country-men; and that the greater Affection any one has for his Country-men, the fonder he muſt be of their peculiar Cuſtoms and Manners. In order to ſhew in what Condition publick Spirit is at preſent among us, we ſhall proceed to enquire into the Difference between the Manners of our Anceſtors and our own.

But before we proceed to the foreſaid Enquiry, it concerns us to anſwer an Objection, which is drawn from the very Nature of Publick Spirit, and from the Definition which has been given of it. Publick Spirit is the ardent Love of one's Country, affecting us with a zealous Concern for its Honour and Intereſt, and inſpiring us with Reſolution and Courage to promote its Service and Glory. Now the Nations retaining their primitive Cuſtoms are rude and barbarous, and by conſequence weak, obſcure, and miſerable. The *Grecians* took their Laws, their Learning,

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and their Philoſophy in a great meaſure, from the *Egyptians*; and the *Romans* theirs from the *Grecians*; and we have taken our Learning and Philoſophy from the *Romans* and *Grecians*: Now who can doubt but that That Learning is at once our Defence and Ornament? How could our Navigation have riſen to ſuch a Height; our Navigation, upon which the Honour and Intereſt of this Iſland depends, but by the means of our Mathematicks, which we have taken from the *Grecians*, and without which we could neither take our Enemies Towns, nor fortify and defend our own?

To which we anſwer:

That 'tis impoſſible any reaſonable Doubt can be made, but that a Nation may take any thing from another, that may improve their Reaſon, their Virtue, their Intereſt, and their Power. Nay, every Nation is oblig'd by Duty, and by the Dictates of Publick Spirit, to do this: But the Manners and Cuſtoms of which we ſpeak, are ſuch as diſtinguiſh one Nation from another. Now as it is not Reaſon that diſtinguiſhes one Man from another, for that is the ſame in all, it cannot by conſequence be Reaſon that diſtinguiſhes one Nation from another.

That which moſt influences the Generality of People, and makes the greateſt Impreſſion upon them, is ſomething which is the Object of Senſe; and the Manners and Cuſtoms of Nations, which we ſpeak of, are the Objects of Senſe; ſuch as thoſe which *Plato* mentions, *viz.* their Habits, their Motions, their Exerciſes, and their Dances.

'Tis indeed our Duty to emulate the Virtue and Knowledge of other Nations; but by imitating their Manners, which are the Objects of Senſe, we come to affect their Vices. And as every thing which is Senſual takes off from that which is Rational; the aping their Manners, which are the Objects of Senſe, diverts us from imitating thoſe good and

thoſe

thoſe great Qualities, which may augment our Reaſon, and Intereſt, and Reputation, and Power.

But here another Objection may be eaſily ſtarted; for as to thoſe Manners and Cuſtoms which are the Objects of Senſe, ſome may ask, Are we oblig'd to reſume thoſe of our Anceſtors? And as to Habits particularly, would you adviſe us to follow the ſame Form that was us'd in the Beginning of *Henry* the Seventh's Reign, which time was before the great Alteration of Manners? Why, no; to adviſe that would be perhaps ridiculous. But tho' I am not for reſuming thoſe of our Anceſtors, why may we not as well now fix upon ſuch as are proper and peculiar to us, as we did in the Time of King *CHARLES* the Second; when, in a general oppoſition to *France*, we threw off their Faſhions, and put on Veſts, that *we might look the more*, ſays the late Lord *Hallifax*, *like a diſtinct People, and be no longer under the Servility of Imitation.* The whole Paſſage is ſo very remarkable, that the tranſcribing it, cannot fail to inform and entertain the Reader. 'Tis in *the Character of a Trimmer*, written, I ſuppoſe, in the Time of King *CHARLES* the Second.

Among the other Means us'd for the attaining that End (that is, for the getting all *Flanders* for the *French*) *the ſending over the Dutcheſs of* Orleans *was not the leaſt powerful. She was a very welcome Gueſt here, and her own Charms and Dexterity, join'd with other Advantages that might help her Pretenſions, gave her ſuch an Aſcendant, that ſhe could hardly fail of Succeſs. One of the Preliminaries of her Treaty, tho' a trivial thing in it ſelf, yet was conſiderable in the conſequence. About this time a general Humour in Oppoſition to* France, *had made us throw off their Faſhions, and put on Veſts, that we might look more like a diſtinct People, and not be under the Servility of Imitation, which ever pays a greater Deference to the Original, than is conſiſtent with the Equality, all Independent Nations*

tions ſhould pretend to. 'France *did not like this Beginning of ill Humours, at leaſt of Emulation, as wiſely conſidering that 'tis a natural Introduction, firſt to make the World their Apes, that they may afterwards make them their Slaves. It was thought that one of the Inſtructions that Madam brought along with her, was to laugh us out of theſe Veſts; which ſhe perform'd ſo effectually, that in a moment, like ſo many Footmen, who had quitted their Maſter's Livery, we took it again, and return'd to our old Service. So that the very Time of doing this gave a very critical Advantage to* France, *ſince it look'd like an Evidence of returning to their Intereſts, as well as to their Faſhions; and would give ſuch a Diſtaſte of us to our new Allies, that it might facilitate the Diſſolution of the Knot, which tied them ſo within their Bounds, that they were very impatient till they were freed from the Reſtraint.*

Thus far the late Marquis of *Hallifax*. But now if the aping them in one of their Habits was inſtrumental in producing ſo conſiderable an Event, as the breaking the Triple League, (for that was the *Knot* which his Lordſhip ſpeaks of) an Event, which prov'd ſo detrimental to the Peace and Liberties of *Europe*; what muſt we not think of that Load of Foreign, and particularly of *French* Manners, which have been introduc'd among us, to the Oppreſſion of our own, and the Extinction of Publick Spirit, as we ſhall find in the following Chapter.

The End of the Firſt Chapter.

CHAP.

Chap. II.

WE come now to enquire into the Difference that there is between the Manners of our Anceſtors and our own; as for Example, between the Manners that were in the Beginning of *Henry* the Seventh's Reign, and thoſe of our own Time. We ſhall find that the Difference is almoſt infinite: For Religion, which never fails to influence all the Manners, tho' that of our Fore-fathers was a great deal miſtaken, yet was it very ſincere, and conſequently a great deal better than none. And it was better for Government, of which Religion is the firſt great Hinge, that they were very much miſtaken in Superſtructures, than if they had boldly and impiouſly ſtruck at Fundamentals. As they were ſincere in their Religion, they were ſound in their Morals: The Men were at once both juſt, and generous, ſincere, faithful, laborious; the Women modeſt, obedient, chaſt, and diligent: Both Men and Women frugal, liberal, temperate, hoſpitable. Their Converſation and their Diet were like their Manners ſimple; their Converſation without Fraud, and their Diet without Artifice. Both their Meat and their Drink, for the moſt part, were of the native Growth of their Country, and the coſtly Juice of the Grape was us'd oftner for Phyſick, than it was for Pleaſure. They ſpent a great deal of their Time in the Country among their Tenants, to whom their Hoſpitable Houſes were always open. Their Tenants liv'd under them at eaſy Rates. They were the Tutelary Gods of the Poor, who in Sickneſs had Phyſick from them, and in Health their Food, and in both their Habitations. Their way of Living in the Country, their Diet, their Air, their Oeconomy, and their rural Diverſions and Exerciſes confirm'd their Healths, and improv'd

prov'd their Eſtates, and ſupply'd them both with Strength of Body, and with Vigor of Mind. So that their Minds were ſerene, or their Paſſions moderate; their Diſtempers neither frequent nor violent, and their Children healthful, lively, robuſt and nervous. And whenever they unwillingly went to Town, the Occaſion was important, and the Stay was ſhort; and during their ſhort Continuance there, they ſpent not their Time in ignoble Luxury, or in mad Profuſion, nor made themſelves vile in the Eyes of the World, by frequenting Houſes of promiſcuous Aſſemblies. Their Converſation lay for the moſt part with their Equals both in Birth and Rank, or with ſuch as ſupply'd the Defect of thoſe by true Nobility of Mind: Or if at any time, upon the account of Buſineſs, or Humour, or Variety, they were familiar with their Inferiors; at the ſame time they took care to ſhew, that they knew how to deſcend with Dignity. Their Converſation was ſincere and ſafe; they were true to their Friends, and juſt to their Enemies; nor did they then, as it were by Conſent, by the means of falſe Dice, ſophiſticated Wine, and more impure adulterate Friendſhip, make War at one and the ſame time upon one another's Perſons, Eſtates, and Reputations. Nor did they ſquander away their Lives in thoughtleſs, inglorious Indolence; they were always active for the Good of others, yes nobly active for the Good of their Country, for which they were with ſo much Zeal concern'd, that every Perſon or Thing was dear to them, that could promote its Honour, or its real Intereſt; and every Perſon or Thing deteſtable, that threaten'd Danger or Diſhonour to it: For this Reaſon they were Encouragers of Learning and Arts, of the uſefulleſt Learning and the nobleſt Arts; for the promoting and ſpreading of which, they founded Colleges, and erected Schools. But they had at the ſame time an extreme Contempt

for ſoft, luxurious, effeminate Arts; they had an utter Abhorrence for foreign Cuſtoms and foreign Faſhions, and for thoſe who introduc'd them. And their Habits, and the reſt of their Cuſtoms and Manners were ſuch, as very fairly diſtinguiſh'd their Birth, their Age, their Sex, and their Country. The generous Youths were many of them in thoſe Days what the Duke of *Argyle* and Sir *Richard Temple* are now; they eſteem'd it infamous to lie idle at home, while their Country was in danger abroad; and aſſoon as ever they became patient of Arms, they made their own laborious Experience their chief Inſtructor in War; and plac'd their Love and their chief Delight, rather in warlike Steeds, and in beautiful Armour, than in wanton Strumpets and luxurious Feaſts. Therefore to Men like theſe, no Labour was ſtrange or hard, no Preparations of the Enemy dreadful, and no Fortreſs impregnable. Their Virtue was ſufficient to conquer all. The great Contention among thoſe *Britons* was for Glory, and not for Power; who firſt ſhould march to the Aſſault, who firſt ſhould mount the Breach, who ſhould have the moſt numerous Spectators of their gallant Actions; here lay their Strife, theſe they accounted their moſt valu'd Riches, this their Fame, and this their high Nobility. Liberal of Wealth, but Uſurers and Extortioners of Fame, they were contented with honeſt Fortunes, but aſpir'd to boundleſs Glory. Who knows not what numerous Armies of the *French* have formerly been overthrown by ſmall handfuls of ancient *Britons?* Our Fore-fathers Glory had tranſcended that of the ancient *Grecians*, had they like them found but Hiſtorians equal to their Actions. But they who had the moſt Capacity among them always were the moſt employ'd; all exercis'd their Bodies and their Minds together; and all the braveſt and the beſt among them, were leſs willing to relate the Deeds of others, than to have others immortalize

their

their own. And therefore both at home and abroad good Manners were cultivated. And as they had nothing of ſordid Intereſt, there could be no Faction among them; but Equity and Virtue prevail'd more among them by the Force of Nature, than by the Authority of Law. Their Quarrels and Diſputes were with the Enemies of their Country. The ſole Contention that they had with their Country-men, was who ſhould be moſt virtuous. And ſo by theſe two noble Arts; by Intrepidity in War, and by exact Juſtice in Peace, they made themſelves and the State illuſtrious.

To paint the Manners of our own Times graphically, in ſo little Compaſs as that to which I have confin'd my ſelf, would require a much greater Maſter than ever I can pretend to be. To ſay that the Counter-part of what I have ſaid of our Anceſtors is true of the Manners of our own Times, is to ſay ſomething, but not the hundredth part of what the Subject will bear. Theſe Manners are ſo various, ſo complicated, ſo prodigious, that one might compile Volumes of them. There is not a greater difference between what *London* was in *Harry* the Eighth's Time and what it is at preſent, than there is between the Manners of our Anceſtors and our own. This over-grown Town may be ſaid to be a viſible, palpable Proof of the Growth of the *Britiſh* Luxury.

For *Religion*, never was there ſo much of it in Talk, never ſo little of it in Fact: Ten thouſand People make it their Pretext, who are the moſt extraordinary Hypocrites that ever were in the World; for while they make it their Pretext, they neither care for it, nor would be thought to care for it. At the ſame time that they pretend to contend for the Purity of it, they openly maintain and avow Principles that are deſtructive of the Fundamentals of it; and are ſo far from concealing the Lewdneſs of their Practice, that they make their daily Boaſt of it.

This was not all; for the Chriſtian Religion, the very Spirit and Being of which lies in Charity, and the Effects of it, Humility, Meekneſs, Self-denial, Concord, Unity, was made the Pretext for the utter Subverſion of all theſe, and ſetting up in their ſtead Hatred, Malice, Rage, Violence, Tumult, Riot, Rebellion, Confuſion, Anarchy, which are contrary to the very Soul and Being of all Chriſtianity. And what appears more incredible than all the reſt, it has been reported, that a great many Perſons of Condition have made it their Buſineſs to ridicule and baffle the Chriſtian Religion, and to introduce Deiſm; though nothing is more plain, than that to extinguiſh Reveal'd Religion, is to introduce Anarchy. For there never was from the Beginning of the World to this Day any manner of Government without Revelation, pretended or true, and never can be as long as the World endures. The eſtabliſh'd Religion, which is the firſt great Mover of the publick Manners, being in this Condition, the latter muſt needs be in a deplorable State.

Ex divitiis (ſays *Salluſt*) *Juventutem, Luxuria atq; Avaritia, cum Superbia invasëre; rapere, conſumere, ſua parvi pendere, aliena cupere.*

Where by the way we may ſee, that St. *Evremont* was miſtaken, when he ſpeaks of the *Alieni appetens, ſui profuſus*, as an extraordinary ſingular Turn and Double in *Catiline*'s Nature; for *Salluſt* affirms the very ſame thing of all the *Roman* Youth that he does of *Catiline*, *Rapere, conſumere, ſua parvi pendere, aliena cupere*; Riches made them proud and luxurious, Luxury made them neceſſitous, and Neceſſity baſe and venal.

Pride, Luxury and Avarice, the legitimate Offſpring of Self-Love, which is private Spirit, and which are the firſt Cauſes of all Mutation of Manners,

ners, have made ſuch a diſmal Havock in ours, that we have hardly any Remains of thoſe of our Forefathers. Pride makes our Gentry hate and deteſt Solitude, as where they have no Opportunity to ſet themſelves to Show, and drives them from the Country to Crowds and numerous Aſſemblies; where inſtead of courting true Glory by Heroick Actions abroad, or by wholſome *Britiſh* Councils at home, many of them endeavour to diſtinguiſh themſelves by Parties, and ſtudy Faction and Diviſion in order to arrive at Power. For to ſpeak freely and impartially, the Perſons who during theſe late Years have made moſt Tumult and moſt Stir in the State, ſome to aſſert the Prerogative of the Crown, and the Authority of the Church, others to ſecure equal impartial Liberty to the People; have all, to the Reſerve of a very few, under the Shelter of theſe ſpecious Pretexts, contended for their own Power.

Others of our Gentry, who have left their Hereditary Seats in the Country to eſtabliſh themſelves in Town, have endeavour'd to diſtinguiſh themſelves, and to outvie one another by their foppiſh Profuſion, in Eating, Drinking, Dreſs, and Equipage; as if Honour were to be acquir'd by ſhaking Hands with Reaſon and with Common Senſe. And the more extravagant the Vanity of our modern Fops has been, the more they have thought to grow remarkable by extraordinary Trifles, and the more fond have they been of introducing Novelties. And becauſe they themſelves have been ſomething dull of Invention, they have moſt humbly condeſcended to borrow from their mortal Enemies, and have valued themſelves upon *French* Habits, *French* Diſhes, and *French* Dances, as Sir *Martin* does upon his Man's Voice and Muſick.

Since then Publick Spirit flows from the Love of one's Country; and to love one's Country, is to love

love the Manners of it; it is manifeſt, that we can have very little publick Spirit among us; for we have no Manners of our own to love; our Manners are thoſe of all the neighbouring Nations. And whereas it was formerly a part of the *Roman* Wiſdom, whenever they gave to other People the Right of *Roman* Citizens, to oblige them to throw off their old Cuſtoms, and become conformable to theirs; we at a time of general Naturalization are throwing off the very Remains of our old Cuſtoms, and embracing thoſe of all the Nations whom we deſign to receive.

Methinks it ſhould mortify all thoſe who pretend to diſtinguiſh themſelves by introducing ſuch empty Trifles among us, to conſider what is become of thoſe, who were at the Head of the Faſhions and Cuſtoms thirty Years ago. Are they not as much forgot, nay are they not more, than *Fowler*, and *Rockwood*, and *Ringwood*, that lead the Duke of *York*'s Fox-hounds then.

But Luxury which began by Pride, grew habitual by Length of Time, and was then improv'd by ſenſual Pleaſures to an amazing Height.

There would be no end of enumerating the ſeveral Wines which we uſe to debauch us, or the various Diſhes, or their unnatural Mixtures, or their high Aromatick Sauces, thoſe fierce Incendiaries of the Blood and Spirits. The *Romans* in the Times of their corrupted Manners equall'd us perhaps in theſe: But we are not contented, as they were of old, to rifle the Earth, the Air, and the Sea, to advance our ſenſual Pleaſures; we have rais'd Recruits from the very Fire, and made e'en that devouring Element, that in the Time of our Fore-fathers conſum'd all, but produc'd nothing, fertile of a thouſand Luxuries; witneſs our Brandy, our Uſquebaugh's, our *Roſa Solis*, our *Ratifia's*, and all the Family of deſtructive Spirits. Theſe Multitudes of

People

People conſtantly uſe to invigorate themſelves, not conſidering that Nature vigorous and undebauch'd draws the beſt and the nobleſt Spirits from the ſimpleſt Liquors, and the beſt and the moſt congenial of all from Water: For ſhe, like ſome other Mechanicks, operates beſt with her own Inſtruments, and uſes but ankwardly thoſe of Art.

But theſe Spirits are grown as habitual to the Women, as they are to the Men; in whoſe tender Conſtitutions they raiſe fierce Ebullitions and violent Emotions, too rude for the delicate Texture of their Fibres: And for half the Year together, they neither take any Air, nor uſe any Exerciſe to remove them. From hence Diſtempers of Body and Mind; from hence an Infinity of irregular Deſires, unlawful Amours, Intrigues, and Vapours, and Whimſies, and all the numerous melancholly Crowd of deep hyſterical Symptoms; from hence it comes to paſs, that the Fruit of their Bodies lies in them like Plants in hot Beds; from hence it proceeds, that our *Britiſh* Maids, who in the Times of our *Henries* were not held marriageable till turn'd of Twenty, are now become falling ripe at twelve, forc'd to Prematureneſs by the Heat of adventitious Fire.

Thus has our Luxury chang'd our Natures in deſpight of our Climate, and our Girls are ripe as ſoon as thoſe of the *Indies*. Nor has it only chang'd our Natures, but transform'd our Sexes: We have Men that are more ſoft, more languid, and more paſſive than Women; Men, who like Women are come to uſe Red and White, and part of the Nation are turning *Picts* again. On the other ſide we have Women, who as it were in Revenge are Maſculine in their Deſires, and Maſculine in their Practices; yes, we have Vices which we dare not name, tho' after the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*; and to mention which with an open Frankneſs, would require the Boldneſs of a perfect Saint, or an accompliſh'd Libertine.

Few

Few Conſtitutions and fewer Eſtates are ſufficient to ſuch Luxury: Yet happy were Men, if the want of Money could mortify or ſubdue their boundleſs Deſires; ſuch a Victory were cheaply purchas'd at the Expence of Ruin. But the Miſchief is, that when the Habit of Luxury is grown inveterate, Indigence does but exaſperate Deſire, and Deſire makes Indigence inſupportable. And therefore a Perſon who has a Thouſand a Year, and who yet cannot live under two or three Thouſand, is ten times more unhappy, and has ten times more want than an honeſt Beggar, who could live contentedly on twenty: And therefore this latter does only beg, while the other too frequently robs and ſteals, not indeed from particular Perſons, becauſe that cannot be done without Danger of Infamy, or of corporal Puniſhment, but from the Publick without any Reluctance, where tho' perhaps the Danger to himſelf may be a thouſand times leſs, the Guilt and the Miſchief are a thouſand times greater. Thus private Luſts are too often ſupported by publick Frauds and Rapines; and the ſupporting of theſe makes him, who before he conſum'd his Eſtate, retain'd his Honour and his Integrity, fraudulent, venal, rapacious, cruel, oppreſſive; this makes him rack and grind his Tenants, and diſpoſſeſs his inſolvent Debtors, ſeizing at once upon Body and Goods, to the irrecoverable Ruin of themſelves and their Families, without Compaſſion or Conſideration of their deplorable and inevitable Misfortunes. And this Inhumanity perhaps is ſhewn, not to get Money to diſcharge his lawful Debts, but to ſatisfy forſooth his Debts of Honour, which by being preferably paid to the other, are chang'd to Debts of Infamy. This ſets him upon encloſing Commons, where buying out the Rights of the rich and powerful, he tramples upon the Necks of the poor and impotent, and throws them out of their ancient Dwellings by

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Violence, while the wretched Inhabitant grows abandon'd, helpleſs, and ſpiritleſs, and only fit for Servitude. 'Tis this that obliges him to let out his Eſtate to Monopolizers, who are capable of advancing large Sums to ſupply his Profuſions; one of which Monopolizers perhaps ſhall rent two Thouſand Pounds *per Annum*; all which Land perhaps being graz'd, is manag'd by a few Servants, that formerly maintain'd no leſs than forty Families. And this one Tenant has been known to be a notorious Papiſt, who has ſold his Hereditary Eſtate, and enter'd upon this new Commerce, to avoid the paying of double Taxes, and to elude the Power of the Laws.

'Tis nothing but Want, occaſion'd by Luxury, that has rais'd Gaming to ſuch a Height, that it has done more Miſchief than a Plague; for the latter only conſumes the preſent People, whoſe Kind is immortal, and therefore muſt ſpring up again; but the univerſal Extravagance of Gaming diſorders the very Form and Being of Government, eſpecially when 'tis carry'd on with ſuch a Rage, that neither Sex ſets any Bounds to it; but Men and Women, in the Fury of their Paſſion, looſe all Government and all Decorum. The Men forget their Birth, their Rank, their Dignity, their Underſtanding, their Virtue, and herd and converſe with mean Wretches, who are often both Fools and Knaves. Men of the firſt Quality keep worſe Company, than Prince *Harry* does in *Shakeſpear*'s Play, as a Pick-pocket is more ſcandalous than a High-way-man. 'Tis wonderful to ſee People live ſo much above themſelves, and keep Company ſo much below themſelves; to ſee ſo much Pride with ſo little Subordination.

The Women lock themſelves up at Cards whole Days and Nights ſucceſſively, and forget their natural Pleaſure of being ſeen, and of being admir'd; and Avarice gets the better of their Pride, as Luxu-

ry in ſome of them had done before; and gets the better of their Pleaſure likewiſe, gets the better of that Pleaſure which is ſo natural to them, and makes them ſhew a ſtronger Paſſion than that which they have for Men. Yet Avarice that drew them from their natural Deſires, ſometimes brings them back again; and ſome of them, like the ancient *Germans*, play for their Perſons after they have loſt their Pelf.

While both Sexes are thus tranſported by ſo fatal a Frenzy, where can be any Oeconomy; and without Oeconomy, how few can be good Subjects? Great Eſtates are often conſum'd in a little Time, while Avarice and Profuſion, Pride and Baſeneſs walk Hand in Hand together, and Want ſprings up from the Deſire of getting. But by the ſame degrees that a Man grows indigent at home, he often grows clamorous and turbulent in the State; for none are more clamorous than they, who under a pretence of publick Good, are ſtriving for Power and Place; and none more eagerly contend for Power, than they who are urg'd by their preſſing Neceſſities to make their Markets of the State.

But of all the Faſhions that have been introduc'd among us from abroad, none ſhews ſo deplorable a want of Publick Spirit as the *Italian Opera*, and the extravagant Encouragement that upon the account of that, is at the Expence of all that is good and great among us given to worthleſs Fools, who can pretend to no Merit but Sound. I had once an Intention of inſerting a long Diſcourſe of it here, but I have omitted the greater part of it, out of fear of offending ſome Perſons, for whom I have conceiv'd a more than ordinary Eſteem, and who are truly eſtimable. They have indeed ſuch good and ſuch great Qualities, and which ſhine ſo truly bright, that they want not the Foil of this ſenſeleſs Encouragement to ſet them off to the World. How much

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'tis to be lamented, that the Preſſure of their Affairs, their Itch of Novelty, and their Pride of ſhewing their Power at too precious an Expence, diverts them from conſidering the Harm which they do both to themſelves and the Publick; and from reflecting on that ſpecious Pretence which they give to their Enemies to call in Queſtion their very Wiſdom; that Wiſdom which even their Enemies allow to be ſo conſpicuous in the reſt of their Actions. The Proſperity of the Bad, ſay they, and the Sufferings of the Good, have made Millions doubt of Providence; when they, who by their Quality, their Rank, or their Fortunes influence and ſupport the Pleaſures of the Town; when theſe diſcourage Merit, and encourage Fools, may we not believe, ſay they, that they are rather govern'd by Fancy and by Humour than by Reaſon? Muſt we not admire, ſay they, the Profoundneſs of theſe Gentlemens Politicks, when we ſee them forſaking their moſt ſerious Affairs, for a wanton and a ſenſual Trifle, ſo unworthy of their Gravity, their Rank and their Dignity, that 'tis not worthy of Men. Manly Pleaſures are rational Pleaſures; mere ſenſual Pleaſures are common to Beaſts with Men. The Pleaſure that effeminate Muſick gives, is a mere ſenſual Pleaſure, which he who gives or he who receives in a ſupreme Degree, muſt be alike unmann'd. A muſical Voice is natural only to ſome Species of Birds, but always accidental to Men; for which Reaſon a Cock Nightinghale ſings better than *Nicolini*, nay or than *Syphace* himſelf could, without being taught or without being gelt for the matter; and there is a better *Opera* in a *Kentiſh* Grove in the Month of *April*, than ever there was at *Rome*, at *Naples*, or at *Venice*. Do not the Politicks of theſe Gentlemen, ſay they, turn Mr. *Bays*'s Politicks out of Ridicule? For is not the Conduct of the two Kings of *Brentford*, become as it were a Precedent to ſome of our modern Politicians?

ans? With what Countenance can they hereafter laugh, when they hear the Brother Monarchs ſay as they deſcend from the Cloud.

1 K. *Come now to ſerious Counſel we'll advance*;
2 K. *I do agree, but firſt let's have a Dance.*

For can any one, ſay they, give a tolerable Reaſon, why a Dance is not as proper a Preparation for Council as a Song? But Mr. *Bays*'s Politicians only proceeded from Dance to Council, and there was an End of the Matter; our modern Politicians advance from Song to ſerious Council, and from ſerious Council before 'tis half ended to Song again; and ſo have made it their Buſineſs of late Years to refine upon Mr. *Bays*'s Politicks.

Where, ſay their Enemies, is the Love which theſe Gentlemen bear to their Country; that Love which has been ſo much boaſted of? And when here we urge in their Behalf the important Services which they have done for it; to this their Enemies reply, that they own indeed that they have done their Country important Services, but that therefore they truly love their Country, is not a good Concluſion: A Man, ſay they, may do another very ſignal Service, and may do it heartily, not becauſe he loves that other Man, but becauſe 'tis his Intereſt to ſerve him heartily, for, ſay they, there are theſe following remarkable Differences between true Friendſhip and a Commerce of Intereſt.

1. A true Friend loves the Manners of his Friend.
2. He loves thoſe who are Friends to his Friend.
3. He hates his Friend's Enemies.
4. He appears zealous on all Occaſions for his Friend's Reputation and Intereſt; to which he never fails to ſacrifice both his Intereſt and his Pleaſure.

5. He

5. He delights to hear of the good Qualities of his Friend, and hates to hear of his Defects.

On the contrary: 'Tis a ſure Sign, ſay they, of a Commerce of Intereſt,

1. When a Man appears to be ſo far from loving the Manners of his Friend, that he plainly ſhews a Diſguſt to them, and affects thoſe of his Friend's Enemy.
2. When he neglects thoſe who are dear to his Friend, and does good to his Friend's Enemies.
3. When in ſome things he diſcovers a great Indifference as to what concerns the Intereſt or the Reputation of his Friend.
4. When he delights to hear of his Friend's Defects, and appears to be not at all affected with his good and his great Qualities.
5. When he appears to be more touch'd with the moſt trifling Advantages of his Friend's Enemies, than with the moſt glorious Accompliſhments of his Friend.
6. When he never fails to ſacrifice his Friend to his Humour or his Pleaſure.

But now, ſay they, let us conſider the Management of theſe Gentlemen, who have introduc'd the *Opera* among us, and who have encourag'd it at this extravagant Rate. The introducing of other foreign Cuſtoms among us, proceeded as it were from a Combination of all ſorts of People; but a few have introduc'd the *Opera*, in Deſpight and Contempt of the reſt. If theſe Gentlemen love their Country, why do they ſacrifice its Intereſt and Reputation for a Song? Why do they ſacrifice theſe noble Arts, which may bring Profit and Renown to it, to inglorious ones, which threaten it with Danger and Infamy. What Article has Muſick in the

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Grecian and *Roman* Greatneſs? What has it in our own? When they have anſwer'd themſelves, let them give themſelves ſo much Trouble as to look into *Bayle*'s Hiſtorical Dictionary, which is now ſpread throughout *Europe*: Let them ſee there, how much of the *Britiſh* Greatneſs is owing to theſe noble Arts, which they have baniſh'd for ſo wanton a Trifle, that 'tis hardly fit for a Woman's Toy.

Since the *Opera* in ſo ſhort a time has made the old *Britiſh* Wit a Jeſt, what Security have we that in twenty Years more, it will not make the old *Britiſh* Courage a Jeſt likewiſe? It has already had that Effect in *Italy*, and perhaps in *France* too in ſome degree. And nothing is more plain, than that Effeminacy is much more compatible with Wit, than it is with Courage. Now is not the *Opera*, ſay they, an effeminate Trifle? Has it not, where-ever it comes, emaſculated the Minds of Men, and corrupted their Manners? Has it not made good the Accuſations of *Plato* and *Cicero*? Why then, if theſe Gentlemen love their Country, do they encourage that which corrupts their Country-men, and makes them degenerate from themſelves ſo much? If they are ſo fond of the *Italian* Muſick, why do they not take it from the *Hay-Market* to their Houſes, and hug it like their ſecret Sins there? Why do they abuſe the Queen's Authority, to enervate and debauch her People, and to diſcourage her Subjects, ſo contrary to her Majeſty's Royal Intention, and the expreſs Words of her Licence? Where, ſay they, is the Gratitude and Juſtice of preferring Foreigners to *Britons*, and in a time of a deplorable War, their Enemies to their Country-men? Is there not an implicit Contract between all the People of every Nation, to eſpouſe one another's Intereſt againſt all Foreigners whatſoever? But would not any one ſwear to obſerve the Conduct of theſe Perſons, that they were protected by *Italians* in their Liberty,

Liberty, their Property, and their Religion againſt *Britons?* For why elſe ſhould they prefer *Italian* Sound to *Britiſh* Senſe, *Italian* Nonſenſe to *Britiſh* Reaſon, the Blockheads of *Italy* to their own Country-men, who have Wit; and the Luxury, and Effeminacy of the moſt profligate Portion of the Globe to the *Britiſh* Virtue? Why do thoſe exotick worthleſs Wretches fare deliciouſly every Day, and ſleep in Purple at Night, while our own Proficients in more generous Arts, of Arts which alone can worthily celebrate the Glories of our Country, and the Triumphs of the Queen's victorious Reign, are ſuffer'd to be reduc'd to the baſeſt Want? A Play, ſay they, is the Imitation of human Life, in order to its Improvement; and yet that is an Art which is about to be loſt among us. But what is an *Opera?* 'Tis ſo fooliſh a thing, that 'tis impoſſible to give a ſerious Deſcription of it: 'Tis the Imitation, or rather the Burleſque of Catterwawling, where Love and Battle are wag'd together with a perpetual Squawling. And yet this is the thing that is ſo much encourag'd. O noble Encouragement! What, ſay they, can they anſwer to this, but that they are pleas'd with the *Opera*, and that they are reſolv'd to ſacrifice all things to their own Pleaſure, even the Honour and Intereſt of their Country? Now can any thing in the World ſhew a more deplorable want of Publick Spirit than this? Tho' there was little of it in the Nation before, yet many People ſhew'd ſo much Eſteem for it, at leaſt to pretend to it: But theſe Perſons by ſuch a Declaration manifeſtly boaſt of the want of it; they boldly confeſs, that they are not concern'd for the Intereſt and Honour of their Country, and ſo prevail upon all thoſe who can be influenc'd by their Example to throw off any Concern for it.

I am

I am ſorry that theſe Gentlemen ſhould have given their Enemies the ſpecious Pretexts to make Objections like theſe: I can only ſay in Defence of ſome of them what is known to all *Europe*, that not only the Services which they have done the Common Cauſe have been moſt conſpicuous, and moſt illuſtrious; but that they appear'd ſo early in the Defence of their Country, and at a time, when they had nothing but Ruin to expect from their Zeal, that it was undeniably their Love to their Country, and not their Intereſt, which engag'd them in the Defence of it. This I can ſay in the Behalf of three or four Eſpouſers of the *Opera*; and I could wiſh the few deſerving reſt would apologize for themſelves.

But for the numerous Herd of its Encouragers, who have not the leaſt Pretence to Merit, I would not have them think that any part of the preceding Diſcourſe is addreſt to them. They are Perſons whom 'tis very eaſy to contemn, but very hard to ſatisfy, and leaſt of all with Reaſon. 'Tis their Intereſt that the reigning Diverſion of the Town ſhould be that, of which they are often better qualified to judge, than they are who have Underſtanding: They are not only pleas'd with the *Opera* forſooth, they value themſelves upon it, as their Brother Sir *Martin* did upon his Man's Voice and Muſick. If they were the only Perſons concern'd, I believe no one would give himſelf a Moment's trouble to put them out of Conceit with themſelves, and with their darling Bawble. A Rattle of one ſort or other is as neceſſary to keep Fools in Order, as it is Children. And therefore let them e'en go on to be us'd as they have been, that is, like ſo many *Bartlemew Cockes's*, to have the Eunuchs tickle their Ears with a Straw, while they pick their Pockets.

The Ladies, with humbleſt Submiſſion, ſeem to miſtake their Intereſt a little in encouraging *Opera's*; for the more the Men are enervated and emaſculated by the Softneſs of the *Italian* Muſick, the leſs will they care for them, and the more for one another. There are ſome certain Pleaſures which are mortal Enemies to their Pleaſures, that paſt the *Alps* about the ſame time with the *Opera*; and if our Subſcriptions go on, at the frantick rate that they have done, I make no doubt but we ſhall come to ſee one Beau take another for Better for Worſe, as once an imperial harmonious Blockhead did *Sporus*.

If any one thinks I have been too ſevere, let him only conſider, what *Shakeſpear* would have ſaid, if he had been now alive. He had not the thouſandth part of the Provocation that we have, and yet he could not forbear crying out, as it were with a prophetick Spirit.

——————Then there are found
Laſcivious Metres, to whoſe venom Sound
The open Ears of Youth do always liſten;
Report of Faſhions in proud Italy,
Whoſe Manners ſtill our tardy Apiſh Nation
Limps after in baſe Imitation.

And thus we have gone through this Draught of the Publick Manners, which is very far from being writ with Malice, or being deſign'd a Libel upon the *Britiſh* Nation: He who wrote it, loves his Country too well for that; and if he believes the Manners of our *Britons* corrupt, he believes thoſe of ſome Southern Nations to be ſtill more degenerate. But they have already loſt their Liberty by their Corruption; ours is yet entire, and in no Danger at preſent; and it is poſſible for us, if we will mend our Manners, to tranſmit it to our lateſt Poſterity.

However, if I have either exaggerated any thing, or in ſome Particulars have been my ſelf miſtaken, or have been wrongly inform'd by others, I hope the Reader will pardon my Errors for the Sake of my good Intention: For this being a general Satyr, he who wrote it cannot be ſuppos'd to act by Malice or Paſſion. Thoſe Satyrs indeed which deſcend to mention particular Perſons, under Pretence of reforming the Publick, often attack thoſe particular Perſons, and ſometimes the very Miniſters, out of Malice, or Paſſion, or Intereſt. But no Man can bear Malice againſt a Nation, or be angry with a World. He who wrote this is a hearty Lover of his Country; but we have ſhewn above, that he who loves his Country, loves his Country-men, all his Country-men; for he who pretends to affect a Part only, loves only himſelf.

As he who wrote this loves his Country, he will be pleas'd with any Adminiſtration under which it flouriſhes: He is very far from having any reaſon to be angry with the Miniſters; nor if he had, would he ſuffer his Paſſion to get the better of his Reaſon, but would let his private Reſentment be loſt in the publick Tranquillity, and his private Sufferings in the Happineſs of his Country.

Nor are here any bitter envenom'd Reflections upon private particular Perſons, to ruin their Reputations, and undermine their Intereſts. He who writes this, looks upon himſelf as one, who has neither Miſſion nor Authority to expoſe any one to publick Cenſure; nor can any thing excuſe the doing it, but a Certainty, that the Publick will ſuffer if it is not done.

As this is a general Satyr, and cannot be the effect either of Paſſion or Malice, a general Benefit muſt be the chief Deſign of it. The Good which it carries with it, is equally intended to all; even thoſe who happen to be hit by it, are deſign'd to

be oblig'd among the reſt, and ſuffer only by Accident.

And 'tis for this very Reaſon that a general Satyr is preferable to what is particular, not only becauſe the Deſign is more generous, of obliging all, and offending none, but becauſe there is a greater probability of its attaining the End to which it directs its Aim, which is the Reformation of the Reader: For the Pleaſure which we find that the Generality of Mankind takes in particular Satyr, is a certain Sign that the Publick reaps little Benefit from it; for few are willing to apply thoſe Faults to themſelves, for which they ſee any particular Perſon expos'd to Contempt and Infamy. Men will more willingly acknowledge Faults, in the committing which they are join'd with Company ſufficient to keep them in Countenance.

Yet are particular Satyrs, if they are juſt Satyrs, preferable by much to Lampoons or Libels: That only can be call'd a juſt Satyr, whoſe Cenſures are always true; but that which endeavours to decry true Merit, out of Malice, or Paſſion, or Intereſt, is in ſpight of popular Applauſe a Lampoon, and an infamous Libel.

Yet ſeveral Lampoons, both in Verſe and in Proſe, are writ with Wit and Art; and theſe are much better than thoſe thouſand *Extempore* ones, which are hourly utter'd by Club and Coffee-Houſe Gentlemen, *Petty Merchants of ſmall Conceits*, as my late Lord *Halifax* calls them; *who*, ſays he, *are always aiming at Wit, and generally make falſe Fire.*

Tho' perhaps no one is more truly pleas'd by the Charms of a beautiful Imagination than my ſelf, yet I have always been of Opinion, that there is no one Quality of a human Mind, that makes a Man a more impertinent extravagant Blockhead, than that which they call Wit, when 'tis not corrected by

good Senſe, and reſtrain'd by Judgment, as a Doſe of Mercury uncorrected and unfix'd naturally cauſes Driveling. And that which they call Wit in Converſation without good Senſe, and without Judgment, is generally without good Nature likewiſe, and vents it ſelf in Slander.

Slander is a Vice which is mightily in vogue at preſent; a ſpurious Brat begot by Pride upon Malice, ſo luſty and vigorous a Baſtard, that it often thrives by the ſame means which are us'd to deſtroy it.

As 'tis begot clandeſtinely, 'tis nurs'd for a time as ſecretly, till it comes at laſt to be openly maintain'd by the Pariſh. 'Tis a Creature, of which they who begot it are afraid or aſham'd, while they who maintain it are both proud and fond of it, till like the young Cuckow brought up by the Hedge-Sparrow, it comes to prey on its Foſter-Father.

'Tis the univerſal Corruption of Manners that makes this Vice ſo current: 'Tis that which recommends pitiful vile Mechanicks to Perſons of Rank and Quality; recommends even Wretches, who have no Accompliſhment either of Art or Nature, and who are diſtinguiſh'd by nothing but their being univerſal Tale-bearers, and publick Scavengers of Scandal.

Si nous n' avions pas des defauts, nous ne trouverions pas tant de paine, á en trouver dans les autres.

If we were without Faults our ſelves, we ſhould not take ſo much Pains as we do to find others out in them.

For

For as Stocks are jobb'd by People in the City, who have no real Stock but their Impudence; ſo Slander is chiefly carry'd on in the Suburbs by People, who have no Reputation themſelves, and never can have any; by Wretches, who are not only below Fame but Infamy; by thoſe, who will no more be remembred three Days after they are dead, than Flies of the laſt Seaſon: And as, if a Deſign were ſet on foot for levelling Eſtates, all the Beggars in the Nation would come the ſooneſt into it, and be the deepeſt concern'd in it; ſo in this Project for levelling Reputations, the Scum and Off-ſcouring of things is moſt deeply engag'd.

To degrade Merit is their principal Aim; for we have a kind of Oſtraciſm for Reputations eſtabliſh'd by implicit Conſent among us; and nothing is more dangerous than to be too deſerving; and no Deſert is become more unpardonable, than that of the Man who does great Services to the Publick. So that a *Briton* who does great and publick Actions, muſt have a more than *Roman* Spirit: For *Romans*, who acted for the Good of their Country, recommended themſelves to *Romans*; but *Britons*, who have done moſt for the Good of their Country have made thouſands of their Country-men their irreconcileable Enemies.

This Vice is chiefly carry'd on by Wretches, who are ſo worthleſs and ſo thoughtleſs, that they have neither Senſe nor Thought to conſider, that to bark at Objects ſublime and illuſtrious, is the Quality of a Dog and a Slanderer; that to call a Man Knave or Fool makes him neither, but if he is neither, it makes him who calls him ſo moſt emphatically one or the other. That Slander is grown ſo faſhionable and ſo frequent, that it does not always hurt the Slander'd, but that in the Opinion of a Man of common Senſe it always hurts the Slanderer; that it can only be the Intereſt of Men, who want com-

mon

mon Honeſty, and of ſuch who ſeem to be ſent into the World on purpoſe to be the Tools of theſe; but that 'tis the undoubted Intereſt of all Men of Honour and of Merit to defend the Slander'd.

That he who ſlanders any one wants not only common Honeſty, but even common Courage: The firſt, becauſe he condemns a Man whom he does not know to be guilty; the ſecond, becauſe he baſely murders a Man's Reputation behind his Back, when 'tis not in his Power to defend himſelf. If a Judge ſhould condemn any one to die, without poſitive Proof or moſt convincing Preſumption, and eſpecially without hearing him, what a dreadful Out-cry would that formal Murder occaſion? How deteſtable then are they, who upon the moſt frivolous Appearances condemn and execute as far as in them lies, the Reputations of their deareſt Friends and Acquaintance; thoſe Reputations, which are dearer to every good Man, even than Life it ſelf.

Thus much to the Men, whoſe Buſineſs it is to carry on ſo odious a Vice. I am ſorry that 'tis requiſite to ſay a Word to the Women; who by being inſtrumental in carrying on this Vice againſt the Men, have often given too provoking Occaſions for terrible Retalations. Now Slander bears infinitely more hard upon a Woman, than it can do upon a Man; for a Man may retrieve the Reputation of his Courage, his Juſtice, his Honour, or his Eſtate; but a Woman may as ſoon recover her loſt Maiden-head as her loſt Reputation.

In fine, as the Foundation both of inventing and of ſpreading Slander, is in the corrupted Manners of him who invents or propagates it; it follows that Slander being now almoſt univerſal, and raging in all its Height, the Corruption of Manners muſt be likewiſe almoſt univerſal, and at its greateſt Height.

Thus

Thus have we endeavour'd to lay before the Reader a Draught of the Manners of theſe Times, and to place it in as true a Light as we could, that the Reader being convinc'd that Publick Spirit depends upon the Publick Manners, and that we have loſt the Manners of our Anceſtors without making choice of any others peculiar to us, and that we have introduc'd into this Iſland all manner of foreign Cuſtoms and foreign Luxury, may likewiſe be ſatisfied that there is very little publick Spirit among us.

FINIS.

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